Roxbury Dec 12. 1837.

PHELPS MSS.

My dear Mother

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Yours of the 9th I received yesterday. Had I entered a public accusation against you I should feel in duty bound to substantiate my charges, but for a private expression, I do not think I ought to feel obligated to enter upon the defence of a detailed accusation.

And least of all do my feelings incline me to do this, when I see the personal sacrifices you are making, and the brunt of unprincipled opposition you are encountering in your efforts for down trodden humanity.

I read the protest of Mr Potts and the reply one your part, some months ago. I was then much pleased with the protest, and thought the state of the times called for it, and of course I was not pleased with the opposing views which you presented. The details of the case are not fixed in my memory, and I can not spare the time, and I can not summon the resolution to enter into a circumstantial defence of my views.

And I hope Mr Phelps you will not consider me unreasonable in this, when you reflect that I have not made a public animadversion, the private statement to you of my general views upon this subject, does

not, I think, lay me under the obligation of substantiating their objections.

When I see what you are doing and endeavoring for the slave, and contrast those efforts with my own comparative inefficiency I can feel no disposition to utter a word in public to your injury, while I still have a preference, as to the mere things of matter & manner in the presentation of this subject.

I can not expect that this letter will entirely satisfy you; and yet I am not willing to devote more time to this question.

Let this letter, at least, satisfy you of the sincere regards of your friend & brother in the Lord

John S. C. Abbott.

Reply

Boston Dec. 15. 1837.

Dear Brother Abbot

You seem to have misapprehend-ed the ~~design~~ object of my last note altogether. It was no part of ~~that design~~ object to request you to "substantiate" "charges", or to go into a "circumstantial" ~~or~~ any other "defence" of your views", but merely to state definitely "whether the doctrines advanced by me in the controversy, or the manner of advancing them, or both together constituted the ground of your decision. It was therefore a simple statement, not a substantiation or defence of any kind or any thing that I desired.

My design in asking such a statement, was not as I expressly said to draw you into any "public or private controversy on the subject", be your statement what it might, but it was, (1) that I might know the exact ground of your decision, & correct myself if in the wrong, & (2) that knowing this, I might know whether you did or did not stand with the Gen. Association on the vexed question of Pastoral Rights. On both these points your letter leaves me as wise as I was before. It was of course most natural, that you should "not expect that your letter would entirely satisfy me." As the question ~~of your views on the subject~~ of Pastoral rights is not to be settled however by the opinions of ~~yourself or any~~ any man or set of men but by an appeal to argument, as the prospect is also that the subject will have to go through a further & more thorough discussion, & as neither you nor I have time to devote

to a lengthy correspondence for the mere object of finding out what each other's opinions are on the subject, we will close the correspondence on this topic here. I felt I felt it due to myself to make the above explanation, &

I am as ever

Your friend & brother in the Lord

A. A. Phelps.

Rev A. A. Phelps.

Boston

Mass.